

**Political History Collection  
Interview H.0004.03 : Tape 3**

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**Interviewed by:** Melvyn Goldstein and J.T. Surkhang  
**Name:** Alo Chöndze  
**Gender:** Male  
**Age:** 74  
**Date of Birth:** 1919

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## **Abstract**

Alo Chöndze was a major leader of the People's Association in Tibet and India in the 1950s. In this interview, he discusses his work in India establishing an office for Tibetan affairs. He talks about people's feelings toward Ngabö and how they believed him to be a communist, and also the plans made for his assassination. He discusses the Dalai Lama's opinion on wanting to leave India, but how he and other individuals thought he should stay. Additionally, he discusses the representative meeting in Calcutta, the demands they made to the Chinese, and how Ngabö openly opposed Zhou Enlai. Finally, he talks about Shakabpa's handbill, the oath taken by the Kashag, as well as attending the Buddhist Religion Conference and how he wanted to present his petition at that time but was advised against it.

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## **Tape 3**

**A:** So we assembled. Most people didn't know, but we knew. Since we had done the experiment of delivering the messages in an hour, that morning [1959 uprising], the people could gather at one time. Many people just went there but they didn't know what it was all about. From the early times, we had a plan to bring the Dalai Lama to India via Tö, Lhoka and [or] Phari. We discussed this a lot, as to which way we should bring him, and finally, since Bumtang Trunyi was from Lhoka, he suggested in favor of Lhoka. I also planned to go from Lhoka to Bhutan because the road was best. We did a lot for the Dalai Lama to be able to come safely. At that time, I was in India.

**Q:** How did Tseja Gyentsen la know about your plan and the map?

**A:** Do you mean Drönyerchemmo and him?

**Q:** Yes.

**A:** I purposely went to tell them.

**Q:** Why?

**A:** At that time, we were not inviting the Dalai Lama. If the Chinese were going to invite the Dalai Lama, it was Phala's duty and he would know.

**Q:** Not only the map, [but] you also needed to tell the names of the people. Did you tell him the names also?

**A:** We had both the maps and the documents of the names of the People's Association. We sent these documents to India in 1956. As to who knew of this, only Tseja Gyentsen and Drönyerchemmo knew. At this time, only these two knew of the document. Later, at the critical point, we told the internal things to some other trustworthy people.

**Q:** What did these two say when you told them about the special plan? Did they say that it was dangerous?

**A:** No, they were very glad and they were sincere and honest [Tib. lhag bsam mam dag].

**Q:** Didn't they feel kind of strange?

**A:** Not only feeling strange, but really [answer not finished].

**Q:** Actually, there weren't many people thinking in that way at that time, right?

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** Phala was the drönyerchemmo and you had relations with him, and he definitely had a strong relation with Jenkhentsisum. I don't know whether it was Phala's thought and he did it on his own, or whether he did it after discussing it with the Dalai Lama or discussing it with the Kashag, because the Kashag couldn't do it openly by themselves. I don't know about these things.

**A:** We trusted the two of them and told them our innermost talks. They would never tell us to whom they would tell the internal things. He would probably discuss with the Dalai Lama internally or with the Kashag and the Yabshi. I guess that Phala might have discussed with Surkhang, Ragashag and Shasur. Not at all with Ngabö. But in 1956, Ngabö and Phala had a very good relationship. It was a strange happening. When I was there we considered Ngabö, from the first time, as a pure communist. He was the one who brought the Chinese to Tibet. Phala would also have his teeth clenched together and was angry with him and would say, "He, the liar." This is a different story. Just before I came to India, we in the People's Association prepared to kill Ngabö.

**Q:** Do you mean in Lhasa?

**A:** Yes. At this time, Ngabö had many Chinese troops as bodyguards. Now it is time to leak out the secrets. There were six people involved in this and we prepared some people who were Ngabö's friends to go into Ngabö's house and to watch where he was going. We also prepared the people to kill him. We discussed this in the prison and it was to be done as soon as we got out.

**Q:** Who were those people?

**A:** Sandu Lo Nyendra was like this [it seems he was crossing his two fingers together to imply very close] with Ngabö, and also with Surkhang. Then there was Pabongka [Tib. pha bong kha] Chandzö who was also like this [very close], and the two of them were to go to Ngabö and play mahjong and ask where Ngabö was going. Andru Gombo Tashi, Traya Lama Atru [Tib. brag g.yab bla ma a phru?], another Khamba from Markham and I were to shoot Ngabö from the fence of my house when Ngabö would go in front of my house. My house was located near the Surkhang House and Beley Tshonkhor [Tib. dpal lha'i mtsho 'khor] where there was a small pond, and it was easy to shoot from there. But at that time, the plan didn't work out. Then, internally, it was time for me to go to India via Lhoka and Bhutan. Later, we thought that if one of us would be arrested, and if the Chinese would interrogate him through severe torture, he might tell about Alo Chöndze. I didn't care for myself, but it would influence my going to India. Therefore, we said that we should leave him and spare his life for the time being. And it seemed more important for me to go to India.

**Q:** Was Drönyerchemmo the initial one to have the idea to kill Ngabö?

**A:** No, no.

**Q:** Who put forward that idea?

**A:** We put forward the idea.

**Q:** The drönyerchemmo didn't like Ngabö, but he wasn't in the plan to kill him, right?

**Q:** Yes, he would never do that. It was totally done by the Association, but we were supporting the drönyerchemmo. Later, we told them about that.

**Q:** Did he know about that [killing]?

**A:** He said that Drönyerchemmo disliked Ngabö, but when it came to matters like that, he had never been consulted.

**A:** Later, we left it like that and I went to India in the 9th month of 1956. The Dalai Lama went to India in the 11th month of 1956, at the time of the Buddha Jayanti. Along with the Dalai Lama in his retinue were Ngabö and the abbots of the three great monasteries. In New Delhi, we gave the Dalai Lama a petition to stay in India and work for Tibetan independence, and to not return to Tibet. But our work came to naught though we took many methods. The Dalai Lama planned to return to Tibet. There were 16 main people in India, such as the Kashag and the abbots of the three great monasteries. They met daily. We didn't know what they discussed and Gyalo Thondup probably didn't know either. There were about 1,000 Tibetans in India then. So we called a meeting of the Tibetans in India to not let the Dalai Lama go back, and we told him to stay in India. At this time, the Panchen Lama and Ngabö had a discussion. Then Shakabpa, Thubden Nyinje [Tib. thub bstan nyin byed] and I were summoned by the Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama told us, "Now, please do not try to block my return and don't tell me to stay. If I stay in India, there is nothing and there is no plan. So it is useless to stay here. Instead of this, if I return to Tibet, it will be more beneficial. If I stay in India, it will become like the proverb, 'The hill on the other side has no dung and the hill on this side has no carrying baskets.' [Tib. pha ri'i lji ba med pa/ tshur ri'i sle po med pa]." So do not insist on my staying in India. As to the detailed information about my situation, I have given orders to the Kashag, so you should go meet [with] them and the Kashag will explain the situation." Then Shakabpa said a little in reply. Then Thubden Nyinje spoke a little of the situation in Gyantse Pejō [Tib. dpal chos], and then I spoke a little. The Dalai Lama also said, "If I stay here, then the Panchen Lama will do that [Tib. 'di byed kyi red]." He meant that the Panchen Lama would take possession [of Tibet] and there would be nothing if he stayed there. After this, the meeting was held in Calcutta in a big hotel. I was the representative of the People's Association and Shakabpa and Thubden Nyinje were there. In Delhi, the meeting was held in the place which was said to be the king's palace. This was his bedroom and we were called there. We insisted many times that the Dalai Lama stay in India, saying that if the Dalai Lama would return, we couldn't accomplish our goal, but the Dalai Lama said, "There is no other choice but to go back, since there is no benefit if I stay in India."

Then the Dalai Lama told us to meet the Kashag and this is the point when we talked about Ngabö. Then the Dalai Lama went from Delhi to Calcutta two days later. We didn't get the chance to talk with the Kashag and we also went. There he stayed in the biggest hotel and I don't know the name.

**Q:** Was it the Grand Hotel or Great Eastern?

**A:** It was near the Dharamsala. When we, the representatives, got there, the Dalai Lama, the drönyerchemmo, and all the kudrak were there. In Calcutta, I met Phünkang Lhajam. She told me, "They have hoisted a Chinese flag on the Grand Hotel where the Dalai Lama was staying. This is not good at all." At this time, Amdo Gyetong and them were in Kalimpong saying that the Dalai Lama would stay in Kalimpong. I prepared some people in Calcutta and I told Phünkang Lhajam, "This is terrible if the newspaper people see that." So I immediately discussed with Shakabpa and Thubden Nyinje and told them, "We should take it down. Let's go and get it down." They said, "Oh! If we take it down it isn't okay." They didn't want to go. So I couldn't go and do it myself because it was a long distance and I don't know the language, so I let it go.

So we went to meet the Kashag to get an explanation. There was Ngabö, Surkhang and Ragashag. I met the Kashag and they said, "There is no way that the Dalai Lama cannot return to Tibet. In the past, the People's Association and the Kashag had no connection and we were unable to help and support the People's Association. But in the future, we have promised that the government and the People's Association, and also the people inside Tibet and outside, should become allies [Tib. mnyam 'brel] and work together. Therefore, we will go back and deal with the Chinese." At this time there was no talk about independence, but it was possible to talk about postponing the reforms for six years and stopping the Chinese from violating the 17-Point Agreement. So the Kashag said that they would talk straightforwardly with the Chinese and they would do that along with the people together.

At this time, Shakabpa and Thubden Nyinje didn't say anything. I then said, "If you act like this, it is good. But how will you be able to tell the Chinese these things and who is going to tell them? You are just fooling us." And I looked at Ngabö with an angry look. Then the Kashag said, "No, we have made a plan. First we will return and say that the People's Association tried to block the Dalai Lama in India. So we asked the People's Association about the reason to stop the Dalai Lama and they said this and that. We have no choice but to tell the Chinese that we had to do the work which is against the will of the Tibetan people. We will also tell the Chinese about these things and say that in India there are 1,000 members of the People's Association who made the Dalai Lama unable to return. As for internally, we will hold a tsondu gyendzom," which is a meeting of the kudrak, like the government officials, "and we will mobilize the persons inside." This is true.

**Q:** Did the Kashag say that?

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** Was Ngabö there also?

**A:** Yes, at this meeting [in Calcutta] there were Shakabpa, Surkhang, Sandu Rinchen, and Ragashag. Phala wasn't there. The Kashag said, "When we get there, we will call the representatives of all the ranks, like the fourth rank, rimshi, and the fifth rank, letsenpa, and the dzasa. And we will send them to the Chinese." I thought what they said made sense.

I also said, "If this is the case, it is useless for me to stay here and I will return to Tibet. In the past you didn't do anything to the People's Association, but we have been respecting you the whole time. I will return and we will unite. Let's work together." Surkhang said, "No, you all do not have to go to Tibet. You should stay in India. Even if you didn't do any work, it would be effective and beneficial. We will put it into action soon. You don't need to worry about this, we will work with the People's Association." Then I said, "Please give us a written letter about what you said today with the seal on it." The Kashag said, "We didn't bring the seal since this is for the Buddha Jayanti not political work. So this isn't possible."

The Kashag told us, "After going back, we will hold the tsondu gyendzom and tell at the meeting that the People's Association told the Dalai Lama not to return and wouldn't let him go, and they were requesting for the Chinese to leave Tibet and to postpone reforms, et cetera. And we had to accept to tell these to the Chinese. If we didn't guarantee this, then they wouldn't let the Dalai Lama return. And before calling the tsondu gyendzom, we will make preparations and tell some of the meeting members about that so that when the meeting is held, all the representatives will raise their hands and approve it as soon as the Kashag explain the demands of the people in India. And then we will send the representatives of the officials to tell this to the Chinese."

**Q:** What were the main demands?

**A:** For the Chinese to leave and the postponement of reform. Reforms were the main one. When Zhou Enlai came, there was some talk of this.

When the Kashag said this and I said that I was also going back, Surkhang told me to stay and I said, "If we can do that, we will get some time to get prepared for the future." I was thinking to fight in the future. Then Sawang Surkhang said, "We can do that for the time being." He used a proverb, "'Even [if] the stupa would turn upside down, the middle layers will remain in the middle [Tib. mchod rten mgo mjug log kyang/ bang rim sked par gnas kyi red]'. So we can accomplish our goal a little bit."

As I mentioned above, the Kashag said that they didn't bring the seal with them. So I told them, "If so, you should take an oath. Surkhang, Ragashag and Ngabö took oaths saying that we have solidarity [Tib. gcig sgril] with the People's Association and what we said now is true." Then Surkhang said, "Ever since the Tibetan government was set up, the Tibetan government, Kashag, have never taken an oath except at this time." Then we said that this was really good, but since Ngabö was there, we were not that comfortable.

After this meeting was over, and I went to the other room, Drönyerchemmo was there. I called Thubden Nyinje there and suggested to him that we go to see Drönyerchemmo. Thubden Nyinje was related to Phala and he was the maternal uncle of Namgyal Tsering. I told Drönyerchemmo, "Last time, the Dalai Lama told us that the Kashag would explain in detail. When we went to the Kashag, the Kashag said this and that," as I mentioned above, "and I answered them and finally, they took the oath. So can we trust them?" He was surprised and said, "Oh! I swear by the three jewels that it is like the saying that the stripes of humans are inside and the stripes of the tiger are shown outside [Tib. mi'i ris mo nan/stag gi ris mo phyi]. This time, since we came here, we [have] held the meeting of 16 people many times. In these meetings, Ngabö cornered [Tib. bkar] the kalön so much, and he also cornered me severely. And Ngabö said, "You Kashag have signed the 17-Point Agreement with us, the Communist Party. So we have to implement the Agreement. The Chinese were openly doing many things that violated the Agreement, and since the Kashag were governing the Tibetan government's politics, you should have discussed and told the Chinese that you [the Chinese] have violated the Agreement. All people were looking at the Kashag to tell the Chinese about violating the agreement. But, had we discussed about this in the past?" He said this facing Surkhang and Ragashag. Then he said, "In short, I was said to be a pure Communist and you suspected me. And at that time we couldn't discuss at all. You, Drönyerchemmo, also did this and that. Didn't you?" Ngabö said a lot in front of the 16 people, including the abbots of the three great monasteries. By that time, Zhou Enlai was coming to Delhi, and the Dalai Lama and the Kashag had to meet Zhou Enlai. Then Drönyerchemmo said, "Ngabö talked about the reason for signing the 17-Point Agreement, and how that happened and who did what. When Ngabö explained those things, I thought that they were true. Then we met Zhou Enlai and Ngabö told the things straightforwardly to Zhou Enlai." This was also useful for me. Before I came to India in 1956, the war led by Yönrupön in Kham took place, and the war in Ba and Markham continually happened [was ongoing]. When Zhou Enlai came, the journalists asked him about the war in Kham and he said that there wasn't any war there. Then I said, "Zhou Enlai told a lie," and I refuted him and talked about the war in Kham. This was published in the London Times. At that time, Ngabö straightforwardly told Zhou Enlai, "In eastern Tibet, the liberation was not done well." This made Zhou Enlai almost speechless and he had to say, "As you said, I will do something." So Phala told me, "Ngabö said those things straightforwardly to Zhou Enlai. So I trust Ngabö." On that day, Drönyerchemmo trusted Ngabö.

Then we went from Calcutta to Kalimpong with the representative of the monastery, Jayan Dawa, to meet Ngabö. Ngabö was living on the top floor of Sandutsang. I had great faith in Phala. I told Ngabö, "In the past, it happened like this. Now, the Kashag have taken the oath and this is very good. Please carry out what the Kashag had taken in oath when you get back." Ngabö explained many things about the 17-Point Agreement to us. Then he said, "You should work hard. We will do what we said after we return without change."

Then later I went to [see] Ngabö alone again. I did this since it was easier to talk if [we were] alone. I said, "It is our job to do the things among the people. For example, in Kham, Ütsang or elsewhere. But as for giving arms and doing things for war, you people have the power. You should do this well." So Ngabö said, "That is really good." We had the same thoughts. Amdo Gyetong was there and the others said, "Alo Chöndze went to meet Ngabö and Ngabö is a Communist." They didn't know what Ngabö really was and I discussed in detail. So they said this. I went to see Ngabö for the benefit of Tibetans.

Then Shakabpa printed a one-page handbill in the name of the Dedön Tshogpa which talked about the Dalai Lama coming to India and about the People's Association, and that the Kashag held the meeting and the people inside Tibet and outside had united. It was written nicely about how the people should do this and that to the Chinese. It also mentioned the oath taken by the Kashag. At this time, the Dalai Lama was in Gangtok and had to stay [there] for awhile. They sent this handbill along with people going back to Tibet and made it public. Shakabpa handed us over [to the Chinese] like this. This is the proof that he [Shakabpa] was a Communist.

We were waiting in Kalimpong for an answer from the Kashag to say great things about how we had united together, but we waited for one month and then a second month to hear some news about this. Nothing could be done in Tibet against the Chinese regarding the oath that was taken.

**Q:** Was it because Shakabpa distributed the letter?

**A:** Yes. It was because Shakabpa's handbill was distributed. In 1959, when the Dalai Lama, Phala and Surkhang came to India, I asked Surkhang what had happened. "You left guaranteeing us and then you didn't do it." He said, "Before we reached Lhasa, Shakabpa's handbill arrived there." Because of this, the Chinese summoned Surkhang and them, and asked, "Did you go to India for religion or was it to associate with those bad people?" Because of this they were afraid, and Ngabö, Surkhang and Ragashag weren't able to do what they had said.

**Q:** What was the point of the oath?

**A:** It was to revolt against the Chinese in reality, and to hold an official meeting in order to have more strength.

**Q:** The final goal was independence, right?

**A:** Yes, but at first it was not okay to say independence. [Rather it was that] we should get prepared and [then] finally we should achieve independence, but they couldn't do that and the Dalai Lama returned.

**Q:** Why did Shakabpa do this?

**A:** Shakabpa did this because he had a relationship from long ago with the Chinese. This is why I didn't get along with Shakabpa. It's in my book. We held a meeting in Kalimpong. At the meeting I cornered and asked Shakabpa, "You have used the name of Dedön Tshogpa. Who is in this Dedön Tshogpa? This handbill made caused harm [Tib. skyon]." Gyalo Thondup said he didn't use the name and Phünkang Lhajam also said the same. It was just Shakabpa.

**Q:** Was Shakabpa there when you held the meeting?

**A:** Yes, he was there.

**Q:** Was Shakabpa among those who took the oath?

**A:** The Kashag took the oath. There was Shakabpa, Thubden Nyinje and myself who listened to the order. After that, we had a meeting of Shakabpa, Khenjung Lobsang Gyentsen, Gyalo Thondup, Phala and myself. We took an oath. At that time, we had a lot of arguments and finally, Phala said, "Now I'm returning to Lhasa. You all should stay here. Now, there is a lot of talk, like Alo Chöndze was saying that Shakabpa was going to the Communists, et cetera. Please don't do this in the future. I am going back to Tibet. You have unity so that your work can be effective. Later, whatever problems arise, you should meet together to decide what to do. Alo Chöndze has responsibility for the People's Association. You discuss this in the Association and you have to take an oath." So we took the oath to this. But after Phala left, they didn't discuss this with me and issued a new handbill. I told them, "You should have discussed this with me, you are liars." They did bad things.

**Q:** Was it the kalön and you three people only when you met in Calcutta?

**A:** Yes. Sandu Rinchen la was there as the interpreter or something.

**Q:** After that you met with 5-6 people in Kalimpong, right?

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** At that time, did you attempt to make it that all of the Chinese in Tibet should leave, or just to have fewer soldiers or less people?

**A:** We were saying that except for the Chinese living permanently in Tibet before that [before the Communist invasion], we wanted all the Chinese to leave.

**Q:** Did the kalön take an oath on this matter?

**A:** The kalön said, "We will tell the Chinese that they [the People's Association] want the Chinese to leave, and for the time being, please postpone the reforms. If we talk tactfully for the time being, we could buy some time. If the reform was postponed, we would be united with the People's Association. And it was the government's mistake that we could not unite with the People's Association and you are not to be blamed. In the future, we will unite with the People's Association." For this they took the oath.

**Q:** Was there a plan for killing Ngabö in India before this?

**A:** No, there wasn't in India. In the beginning, there was the plan in Tibet, but if it had happened before making the petitions to the Dalai Lama [to return], so it would have been damaging.

**Q:** Did you know that there was an American in India who came with Taktse Rimpoche to talk to Gyalo Thondup at this time?

**A:** Taktse Rimpoche was there, but I don't know about who the American was. The Buddha Jayanti lasted for seven days. On the 2nd day, Gyalo Thondup and Shakabpa didn't come and we came first. We got seats for the meeting. Phünkang Lhajang had gotten us [the] seats. After 2 days, Shakabpa and Khenjung arrived. The next day, Gyetong arrived in Kalimpong. At this time, we had prepared two petitions. One to give to the UNO and one to give to the Buddhist Association. But Gyalo Thondup didn't give the petition to the Buddhist Association and they didn't do anything.

**Q:** Did you ask why?

**A:** They (Gyalo Thondup and Shakabpa) said it wasn't the appropriate time and that they had made a plan. Actually, they didn't have a plan. Since I knew that they didn't have a plan, it became like this. So due to Phünkang Lhajang, we got seats at the meeting. This was in November 1956. Shakabpa went to Sikkim when the Dalai Lama came and he wasn't there, probably because he didn't get the flight.

**Q:** Who was with you?

**A:** There were the representatives of the people.

**Q:** Was Thando Rimpoche a part of the People's Association?

**A:** Yes. He was, but he was not in Delhi.

**Q:** Was Shakabpa and Gyalo Thondup part of the People's Association?

**A:** No. They were part of the Dedön Tshogpa where the Jenkhentsisum was, and there was also Phünkang Lhajang and Lhalung Lobsang Phüntso [Tib. lha lung blo bzang phun tshogs]. Later, Amdo Gyetong, Shakabpa and four other people stayed, and we joined the Dedön Tshogpa together. Lukhangwa, Phünkang, Yuthok and Surkhang were a part of [it]. In the beginning, Lukhangwa was with us, but later he became kind of intoxicated [Tib. gtsug tor 'khyogs] because of Shakabpa. So on the second day, Shakabpa didn't arrive, but on the third day of the Buddha Jayanti, he came and we were in the same hotel. So I told Shakabpa, "Today we have to present the petition to the Buddhist Association." Shakabpa said, "This is a Buddhist religious conference, not a political one. If we give it now, it wouldn't be good." So we had an argument. I said, "I have addressed the petition to the UNO and the Buddhist Association. This time, the Buddhist Association was held. This is an important conference. It is due to the kindness of the King of Sikkim. If you say that there isn't anything in this, this is too bad." So I had a long argument with Shakabpa until 11 p.m. I used a proverb, "You should make it easy to throw the bones and eat the meat [Tib. sha la za bde ba/ rus la dbyugs bde ba]. You have to make clear what you want to do on the basis of the People's Association. And I will think

about it." At that time, Gyetong had a room and Thubden Nyinje also had a room, and I shared a room with a Ganden representative. There were three tsidrung with Gyalo Thondup.

The next day I wrote a letter in my broken Tibetan saying that the CCP had suppressed us and that they should help us, and gave it to the Buddhist Association myself. Gyetong was there when I did this and I discussed it with him because he was also a representative. At the conference, the Sikkim Prince, who was the Secretary of the Buddhist Association, was to make a speech. There were also Chinese delegates there. I planned to stand up when the Sikkim Prince made his speech and take out the letter and tell of all the terrible things that the Chinese were doing in Tibet. Since he understood Tibetan, he could translate it for the conference. I thought if I could say a few words, then I thought this would be the foundation for helping the Tibetan cause of independence. I knew the conference was for religion, but many important people in the world had gone there. Although the Chinese would not answer, in the future when we petitioned the UNO, they would remember that such a thing happened in Delhi at that time. We did this that night, talking and writing until 1 a.m. with Gyetong, Baba Legshey, and Gyadotsang Kelsang being there. At 1 a.m. we broke up and I went to sleep. I put the petition under my pillow. Then my door was knocked on. The person at the door was Thubden Nyinje. He asked me what I was doing. He said, "You shouldn't fight with Shakabpa. We have to do our work in order, one step after another." I replied, "What kind of order? The order is broken. We have to tell the conference now. We should not waste this opportunity. People call you three tsidrung 'runaways.' If you want to fulfill your obligation, tomorrow we will go together. If you don't want to fulfill your responsibility tomorrow, you don't have to go to the meeting. We, the People's Association, will do it tomorrow." He said, "Please don't do it like that," and then left.

The next morning before dawn there was a knock on my door. It was said that Gyalo Thondup, Taktse Rimpoche, Phala and Phünkang Lhajam had come there in the sitting room.

**Q:** Phünkang Lhajam was not there, right?

**A:** She wasn't in that hotel, but she had been called from outside. Then Phala said, "Yesterday Alo Chöndze and Shakabpa had a big argument. Alo Chöndze, your making a petition and preparing to speak at the Buddhist Conference is good, but do not do it here as this is a Buddhist Conference. It is not the point to speak. The most important point of our work here is to get the Dalai Lama to stay and get Tibet independence."

**Q:** Did he say that if you spoke it would harm the cause?

**A:** Yes, he was just deceiving us. At that meeting Shakabpa and Khenjung were also there and they said, "The Chinese have a plan to return the Dalai Lama to Tibet by plane. Let the conference be over. After that, we have things to do." Then I thought that in the future, they might say that there was hope for the Dalai Lama to stay, but Alo Chöndze destroyed it. I said, "I agree about the Dalai Lama staying and to striving for independence, but who is guaranteeing the Dalai Lama's staying in India? We wouldn't know whether the Dalai Lama was going to Tibet or not." At that time, Lukhangwa's daughter Wangmola [Tib. dbang mo lags] was there, and she knows about this. I said, "There are 1,000-2,000 people gathered in Delhi. We are planning to stop the Dalai Lama if he would be brought by the Chinese." Then Phala responded, "Taktse Rimpoche and Gyalo Thondup got permission from the Indian government, and they can go to the Dalai Lama anytime they want. These two will know the situation and they will tell me [if there is any plan to do this (take him back)], and I will tell the People's Association, and then you can get prepared." Actually, they fooled us and made the plan to return. Because of this, I didn't say anything for the rest of the conference. Then I made preparations to give a petition to the Kashag.

**Q:** Did you hear that there was a plan to start fighting in Yadong to prevent the Dalai Lama from returning?

**A:** The People's Association didn't have that plan. When the Dalai Lama was staying in Yadong, among the Kashag and trunyichemmo, they had two views. One said that we should bring the Dalai Lama to India and one said return. At that time, the People's Association was not set up formally and it wasn't involved in this.

**Q:** Litang Athar said that he went by himself to Gangtok and Yadong to make the preparations. He said that he was sent by Shakabpa and Gyalo Thondup, and that they planned to make the disturbance so the Dalai Lama would get frightened and he wouldn't go back. This was the plan and they sent a person to Lhasa to the military headquarters and the magji said, "We can't help you make the disturbance." So the plan was broken.

**A:** This was not like this. The Dalai Lama went to Yadong in 1949. At that time, the People's Association was not there. The kudrak or the Tibetan government did that. They held a meeting and discussed whether to bring the Dalai Lama to India or to go back. What you said is after the Buddha Jayanti was over, they again told lies and tricked us in Kalimpong and said, "After the conference, we weren't able to block the Dalai Lama from leaving Delhi." So we planned to stop him from leaving Kalimpong since there were many Tibetans there. This was done by Drönyerchemmo and those people. But, [when] he came to Kalimpong, the Dalai Lama gave initiations and audiences, and he didn't have any choice but to go back, and he went to Sikkim. Then we thought that it was useless because we weren't able to stop him in Delhi, Calcutta and also Kalimpong, and he went to Sikkim. The Kashag had taken the oath, so it would be okay and I didn't go to Gangtok. Then Yuthok and Trunyichemmo Angula [Tib. am gug lags] arrived there to accompany the Dalai Lama to Gangtok.

Then I got a phone call in Kalimpong from Lukhangwa who was in Sikkim. It said, "I have arrived in Gangtok and tomorrow I am going to have an audience with the Dalai Lama. Before that you must come here to see me. Otherwise, I don't know what has been going on. So I need to know what to tell the Dalai Lama." So I was very glad. I had planned on Lukhangwa to come here. I thought that now I don't need Gyalo Thondup and the liar Shakabpa because there is Lukhangwa. His daughter knows all of this. So I got a taxi and went that night and met Lukhangwa early the next morning. He said he was glad I had come and asked me what he should say to the Dalai Lama. I told him in detail about what happened for the time being, and that the Dalai Lama couldn't stay right away. But, it was fortunate that it had snowed and this delayed the Dalai Lama's departure. So the Dalai Lama would have a talk with him. He said, "I will really tell him that the best [thing] would be [for him] to stay and I will try my best." "The

best would be for the Dalai Lama to stay. In case it doesn't work out, you have to come here as I told you to come and you accepted. You, Yuthok, and Trunyichemmo should stay and work with the Dedön Tshogpa. This time we have a good unity with the Kashag," and I also told Lukhangwa about Ngabö. Lukhangwa and Ngabö were also like this [cannot guess the hand gesture]. But the Dalai Lama told Lukhangwa he had decided to return. After that, Lukhangwa said that the Dalai Lama had decided to go back. Lukhangwa said, "Shakabpa is nothing."

Then Lukhangwa gave me a short letter to be given to Yuthok, saying he and Trunyichemmo should stay in India, and I went to deliver the letter and told him to stay. Yuthok said, "We have come to accompany the Dalai Lama and don't have a plan to stay for a long time." But I told him, "Lukhangwa is requesting you to stay, so you have to stay because we people have great hope in you." Then he said, "Okay I can stay. But first I have to ask permission from the Dalai Lama."

**Q:** Why did you care about whether Yuthok stayed?

**A:** He was a kalön, and the trunyichemmo was the head of the Yigtsang and Lukhangwa was the Sitsab. So we had all three together as the complete Tibetan government. They would be seated on top of Gyalo Thondup and we hoped it would be good.

**Q:** Where did that idea come from?

**A:** This was my plan and I told Lukhangwa to try, and that it would be best if the Dalai Lama stayed. If not, then if Yuthok and Trunyichemmo would stay, then the three of them and myself could cooperate and do things well, and Gyalo Thondup and Shakabpa's group would not be able to do anything. When I told this to the trunyichemmo, he accepted at once and said, "I would appreciate staying here." As for Goldstein's question about starting a disturbance, there was a talk like this. Shakabpa and them had talked about this and planned to send people, but it snowed, so they weren't able to do it. When the snow melted, the Dalai Lama returned. Lukhangwa then came to me in Kalimpong and asked me to help him arrange a pilgrimage in India. Gyalo Thondup probably sent someone to Lhasa about the disturbance.

**Q:** Were you a part of the Dedön Tshogpa and also in the People's Association?

**A:** We were in the People's Association and they were separate. But our trouble was that we didn't know how to write in English and about the law. So we trusted Gyalo Thondup very much because he is the brother of the Dalai Lama, and he also seemed to be very good at English, but later I heard that he was not.

**Q:** His Chinese is good.

**A:** Yes, only Chinese. When they had the Dedön Tshogpa there, the People's Association joined them. Later, we got scattered and there was the false Dedön Tshogpa. And the organization of the Chökasum was also set up, which had a seal that I put in my book.

**Q:** What do you mean by Chökasum? There wasn't anyone who could write things in the Association, right?

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** Phünkang Lhajang is well-educated in English, right?

**A:** Yes, she was great in English, but not in Tibetan.

**Q:** There were many Tibetans in Kalimpong like Shingsar Awala [Tib. zhing gsar a wa]. But sometimes they were together and sometimes they were separate, what was the cause of that?

**Q:** Gyalo Thondup and Shakabpa, and there were the three tsidrung, they became a kind of party.

**Q:** When was that?

**A:** This was in the beginning of 1957 after the Dalai Lama went back. In between that, I wrote my first book in Darjeeling and my wife was the clerk who copied the things. Gyalo Thondup sent someone to Lhasa with a letter. I met him and he said he couldn't go because of the snow.